



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

*Executive Office of Environmental Affairs*

*100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900*

*Boston, MA 02114-2119*

Mitt Romney  
GOVERNOR

Kerry Healey  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Ellen Roy Herzfelder  
SECRETARY

Tel: (617) 626-1000  
Fax: (617) 626-1181  
<http://www.mass.gov/envir>

## Press Release

For Immediate Release  
December 2, 2004

Contact:  
Jennifer Flagg 617-626-1022

### **Herzfelder Announces New Grant Program to Improve Wildlife Habitat**

Westborough—Environmental Affairs Secretary Ellen Herzfelder announced today that the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (*MassWildlife*) has received \$2 million dollars from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to implement the Massachusetts Landowner Incentive Program (LIP). This program will reimburse private landowners with up to 75% of the cost to manage lands to improve habitat for declining wildlife species across the Commonwealth.

“With nearly 80% of Massachusetts’ landscape in private ownership, it’s no wonder that so many rare and declining species are found on private land,” said Secretary Herzfelder. “We must recognize that participation by private landowners not only in habitat protection, but in active habitat management, is critical to successful conservation of our declining wildlife species. This is an example of our investment in the Division’s biodiversity initiative paying a significant conservation dividend.”

Funding for the Massachusetts Landowner Incentive Program comes from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the form of a competitive grant. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife was the only state agency in New England and one of only two in the Northeast region to receive funds in the first round of awards. Due to the Commonwealth’s previous investment in programs such as the Biodiversity Initiative, the DFW’s grant application to the Fish and Wildlife Service was able to clearly show how the agency could target these funds in such away to increase the habitat for a broad array of wildlife populations on private lands. This new program will target habitat management on the nearly 80% of the state which is held in private ownership.

The Landowner Incentive Program provides a new opportunity for *MassWildlife* to work in partnership with private landowners in a proactive way to manage the landscape for wildlife and human needs, much like the agency’s Uplands Program and Sustainable Forestry Programs work to protect biodiversity on state owned property.

During the first round of grant awards, the LIP will focus on maintaining open grasslands and creating areas of young tree growth to enhance wildlife habitat. Examples of projects that might be funded include the mowing of an old hay field to keep it open for grassland bird nesting.

**Funding Eligibility:** Private landowners only (i.e. land trusts, non-profits, individuals) are eligible to apply for this funding which is being administered through the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. State and municipal agencies are not eligible for this program.

**Ranking Criteria:** Below is listed an overview of some of the important ranking criteria for applications for LIP funding. The complete criteria and more information will be available on the LIP WEB site at: [www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/dfw\\_lip.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/dfw_lip.htm)

- Degree of commitment to long term management and protection of the property
- Number of at-risk species affected
- Proximity to Biomap Core Habitat
- Percentage of “match” funding the landowner is willing to commit to the project. Once an application has been accepted and approved the landowner will do the work or contract to have the work done on their property and submit a bill to the Division who will pay for up to 75% of the cost.

# # #